

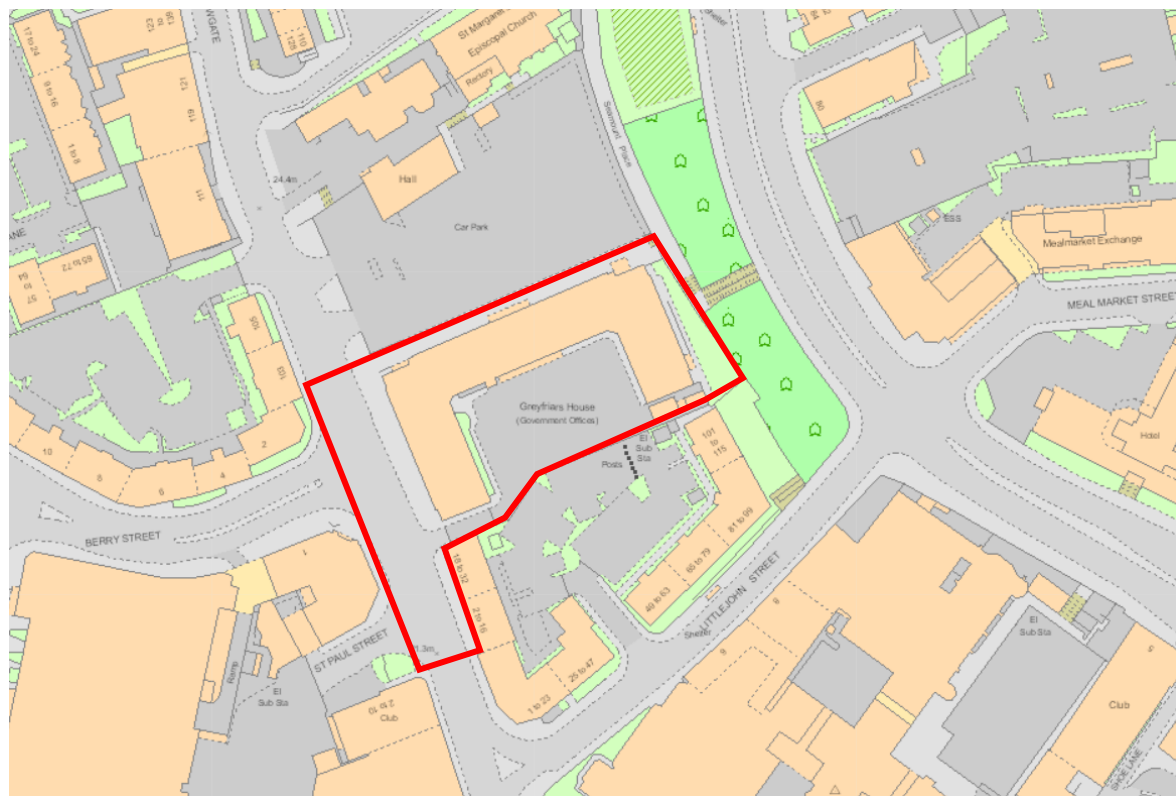


Pre-Application Forum

Report by Development Management Manager

Committee Date: 31 October 2019

Site Address:	54 Gallowgate, Greyfriars House, Aberdeen, AB10 1LU
Application Description:	Major redevelopment to form primarily residential units (maximum approx. 140) including demolition and other ancillary development with car parking, access, landscaping and infrastructure
Application Ref:	191321/PAN
Application Type	Proposal of Application Notice
Application Date:	29 August 2019
Applicant:	Telereal Trillium
Ward:	George Street / Harbour
Community Council:	City Centre
Case Officer:	Alex Ferguson



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APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site comprises a 3 storey and basement 'C' shaped vacant office building and surface car park situated on the eastern side of Gallowgate, lying to the north of a late 20th Century flatted development on Littlejohn Street and immediately to the south of the Gallowgate public car park. The flat-roofed, white-rendered building dates from the mid-to-late 20th Century.

Relevant Planning History

A Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) was submitted and agreed for this proposal under planning reference 191321/PAN on 29 August 2019.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

The proposal is for a major redevelopment to form primarily residential units (maximum approx. 140) including demolition of the existing building and formation of other ancillary development with car parking, access, landscaping and infrastructure.

Three indicative options for the proposed redevelopment of the site have been put forward as follows:

1. **90 units** - One 'C' shaped building approximately replicating the footprint of the existing office building. The new building would be 5 storeys in height, with the top storey at roof level recessed from the wallhead, with balcony terracing;
2. **120 units** – Two buildings: one 5 storey (with recessed top storey) linear block onto Gallowgate and one 'C' shaped block in the eastern half of the site, with a central opening to the carpark to the north;
3. **140 units** – One 'E' shaped building, approximately replicating the footprint of the existing building but with the addition of a central wing projecting south. The building would increase from 5 storeys (with top storey recess) onto Gallowgate, stepping up to 7 storeys (with top floor recessed) at the eastern end.

All three options propose to retain the existing vehicular access taken off Gallowgate which serves a surface car park to the rear (south) of the building. An element of car parking is proposed to be retained in all three options, with a landscaped communal amenity area provided on a deck built above the car park.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan and that determination shall be made in

accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS)
- Historic Environment Scotland guidance: [‘Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting’](#)

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014) (SDP)

The purpose of the SDP is to set a spatial strategy for the future development of the Aberdeen City and Shire. The general objectives of the plan are promoting economic growth and sustainable economic development which will reduce carbon dioxide production, adapting to the effects of climate change, limiting the use of non-renewable resources, encouraging population growth, maintaining and improving the region’s built, natural and cultural assets, promoting sustainable communities and improving accessibility.

From the 29 March 2019, the Strategic Development Plan 2014 will be beyond its five-year review period. In the light of this, for proposals which are regionally or strategically significant or give rise to cross boundary issues between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development will be a significant material consideration in line with Scottish Planning Policy 2014.

The Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2017 will continue to be the primary document against which applications are considered. The Proposed Aberdeen City & Shire SDP 2020 may also be a material consideration.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP)

- D1: Quality Placemaking by Design
- D2: Landscape
- D3: Big Buildings
- D4: Historic Environment
- H2: Mixed Use Areas
- H3: Density
- H4: Housing Mix
- H5: Affordable Housing
- I1: Infra Delivery & Planning Obligation
- NC1: City Centre Development - Regional Centre
- NE4: Open Space Provision in New Development
- NE5: Trees and Woodland
- NE6: Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality
- NE8: Natural Heritage
- T2: Managing the Transport Impact of Development
- T3: Sustainable and Active Travel
- T4: Air Quality
- T5: Noise

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- R2: Degraded and Contaminated Land
- R6: Waste Management Requirements for New Development
- R7: Low & Zero Carbon Build & Water Efficiency

Supplementary Guidance

- Planning Obligations
- Big Buildings
- Affordable Housing
- Resources for New Development
- Natural Heritage
- Landscape
- Green Space and Open Space
- Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality

Other Material Considerations

- City Centre Masterplan
- Aberdeen City Centre Affordable Housing Waiver

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the Proposal

The site lies within the city centre boundary and a mixed use area, as defined by the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP). Policy NC1 (City Centre Development – Regional Centre) states that development within the city centre must contribute toward the delivery of the vision for the city centre as a major regional centre as expressed in the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) and Delivery Programme (although the site actually lies just outwith the CCMP boundary). One of the main aims of the CCMP is to see an increase in the number of people living in the city centre. Thus, the principle of the redevelopment of the site for residential flats could be acceptable in accordance with the CCMP and Policy NC1 of the ALDP.

Policy H2 (Mixed Use Areas) of the ALDP is supportive of a range of uses (including residential), provided the new development / use would avoid undue conflict with the adjacent land uses and amenity. It also notes that where new housing is proposed, a satisfactory residential environment should be created. The site is bound by flats (and associated car parking) to the south, by a public car park to the north and by roads to the east and west (with an embankment and change in levels between the site and West north Street to the east). In principle, the residential redevelopment of the site is therefore acceptable, subject to the detailed design and site layout ensuring that the amenity of the neighbouring flats would be preserved and an adequate level of amenity provided for the occupants of the new development.

Layout, Scale and Design

Issues of layout, scale and design will need to be considered against Policies D1 (Quality Placemaking by Design), D2 (Landscape) and, depending on scale of the proposal, Policy D3 (Big Buildings) of the ALDP. Policy D1 advises that all development must ensure high standards of design and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which takes into account the context of the surrounding area and will

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be required to offer opportunities for connectivity which take in to account the character and scale of the development.

Developments that contribute to placemaking will help sustain and enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural attractiveness of the city. Proposals will be considered against six essential qualities:

- Distinctive
- Welcoming
- Safe and pleasant
- Easy to move around
- Adaptable
- Resource efficient

Policy D2 (Landscape) requires that developments have a strong landscape framework, which “improves and enhances the setting and visual impact of developments, unifies urban form, provides shelter, creates local identity and promotes biodiversity”. Any application must be accompanied by a landscape strategy and management plan, incorporating hard and soft landscaping design specifications.

Policy D3 (Big Buildings) notes that the city centre is the most appropriate location for big buildings and sets out various principles for their design. Big buildings must be of a high quality design which complements or improves the existing site context and they should maintain and enhance the pattern and arrangement of the street blocks and plots, have a slender vertical emphasis and silhouette that are in proportion and have active uses at ground level to the street.

Policy D4 (Historic Environment) seeks to ensure that the historic environment (principally listed buildings and conservation areas) is either preserved or enhanced by new development. In this instance, whilst the existing building is neither listed nor situated within a conservation area, it lies in close proximity to some listed buildings, most notably Marischal College to the south and St Margaret’s Episcopal Church to the north. Care will need to be paid to ensure that any new building(s) would preserve the setting of those two buildings.

Policy H3 (Density) seeks an appropriate density of development on all housing allocations and windfall sites. Densities should have consideration to the site’s characteristics and those of the surrounding area and should create attractive residential environment and safeguard living conditions within the development.

While, Policy H4 (Housing Mix) advises that housing developments of larger than 50 units, such as that proposed, will be required to achieve an appropriate mix of sizes, which should reflect the accommodation requirements of specific groups. This mix should include smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units and should be reflected in both the market and affordable housing contributions. This approach helps to create mixed and inclusive communities by offering a choice of housing.

Technical Matters

Developer Obligations:

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Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. Where additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision, the Council will require the developer to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities. The level of infrastructure requirements and contributions will be outlined by the Council, through the Developer Obligations Assessment and will relate to the development, in line with Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations).

Transport and Accessibility:

With regards to sustainable and active travel, Policies T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development) and T3 (Sustainable and Active Travel) will be used to assess the development, along with the Council's supplementary guidance (SG) on Transport and Accessibility. T2 requires all new developments demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel. In terms of T3, new developments must be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport.

Parking requirements are outlined in the Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Guidance and will depend on the total number of units and the number of bedrooms within each flat. The SG notes that the Council is supportive of zero and low-car developments in the city centre.

Noise:

Given the location of the development adjacent to public roads, it is likely that there will be exposure to noise. As such and as per the requirements of Policy T5 (Noise), a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) will be required in support of an application.

Affordable Housing:

Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) of the ALDP requires 25% of the units in all residential developments of 5 or more units to be affordable. However, in September 2018 the Council published a temporary City Centre Affordable Housing Waiver which removes the affordable housing requirement for new planning applications for residential developments in the city centre, provided they comply with the following stipulations:

- a. *The development must be within the identified boundary.*
- b. *All applications must be determined before 31st of December 2020. This includes the securing of any legal agreement and the issuing of the decision notice.*
- c. *In order to ensure that the Planning Authority is able to process the applications within the above time period planning applications should be submitted by 30th of June 2020. Applicants should be aware that eligible applications submitted after this date or that require additional supporting information which is submitted after that date may not be processed within the period and, in these circumstances as such would not be eligible for the waiver.*
- d. *In order to ensure that all the supporting information required with an application is submitted when an application is lodged all applicants should enter into a processing agreement setting out the expectations of both parties*

in accordance with the Council's guidance. This should be in place at an early stage and may follow on from pre-application engagement.

- e. Development must commence within 12 months of the decision notice. Without exception a direction limiting the period for implementation shall be applied to this effect for all applications determined within the time period. If the time period expires before end date of the waiver (31 December 2020) the applicant will be able to apply for permission to renew the consent, but such applications should be submitted before 30th June 2020 to ensure determination within the waiver time period (as per bullet (c.) above).*
- f. There will be an expectation that developments seeking the exemption will provide a mix of unit types and size. This will be determined on an application by application basis.*

The application site is located within the city centre, thus the Affordable Housing Waiver applies and, should the applicant wish to utilise it, no affordable housing would be required as part of the development (either on-site or by financial obligation) should the application be submitted before 30 June 2020 and determined prior to 31 December 2020. Otherwise, the usual 25% requirement would apply.

Open Space:

Policy NE4 (Open Space Provision in New Development) requires new developments to accommodate an area of open space within the development site. As per the policy the Council requires at least 2.8Ha per 1,000 people of meaningful and useful open space. The Supplementary Guidance on Open Space states that open space standards are based on number of residents within a new development, which can be calculated using the average number of people who live in each dwelling. These figures are outlined in the Supplementary Guidance.

With regards to the commercial/retail aspect of the development, the policy does not state a minimum standard, but this will be considered on its own merit.

Drainage:

As per the requirement of Policy NE6 (Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality), a Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) will be required for the development. The DIA should detail how surface water and waste water will be managed. Surface water drainage associated with development must:

1. Be the most appropriate available in terms of SuDS; and
2. Avoid flooding and pollution both during and after construction.

Waste/Refuse:

All new developments should have sufficient space for the storage of general waste, recyclable materials and compostable wastes where appropriate. Flatted developments will require communal facilities that allow for the separate storage and collection of these materials. Details of storage facilities and means of collection must be included as part of a planning application for any development which would generate waste as per the requirement of Policy R6 - Waste Management Requirements for New Development.

Sustainable Development:

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In terms of low and zero carbon, buildings must meet at least 20% of the building regulations carbon dioxide emissions reduction target applicable at the time of the application through low and zero carbon generating technology. With regards to water efficiency, all new buildings are required to use water saving technologies and techniques. This is a requirement of Policy R7 - Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency and details would be requested via condition.

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

Public consultation was undertaken by the applicant at a drop-in event in the application site building (Greyfriars House) on Thursday 10 October 2019, between 4pm and 7:30pm. Representatives of Telereal Trillium and the Design Team were available to discuss and respond to any queries regarding the proposals. Three options were on display to the public (basic indicative 3D models of schemes containing 90 units, 120 unit and 140 units respectively) and members of the public were able to comment on all aspects of the proposals.

NECESSARY INFORMATION TO SUPPORT ANY FUTURE APPLICATION

As part of any application, the applicant has been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission –

- Location Plan
- Site Plan (Existing & Proposed)
- Elevations (Existing & Proposed)
- Contextual Street Elevations (Existing & Proposed)
- Floor Plans (Existing & Proposed)
- Design & Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report
- Drainage Plans & Statement
- Townscape Impact Assessment (Key Views)
- Tree Survey / Arboricultural Impact Assessment / Tree Protection Plan
- Bat Survey
- Daylight / Overshadowing Assessment
- Transport Statement (TS)
- Refuse Plan
- Swept Path Analysis
- Photographic Survey (Archaeology)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Forum:

- (i) note the key issues identified;
- (ii) if necessary, seek clarification on any particular matters; and
- (iii) identify relevant issues which they would like the applicants to consider and address in any future application.